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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MARR, JA, EG, NATO, ABUD
SUBJECT: RAS BANAS MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. THE MILITARY CONSTRUCTION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE IN MID NOVEMBER RECOMMENDED THE APPROPRIATION OF 49 MILLION FOR AIRFIELD IMPROVEMENTS AT RAS BANAS, EGYPT. LANGUAGE ATTACHED TO THE REPORT MADE OBLIGATION OF THOSE FUNDS CONTINGENT, INTER ALIA, ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S DEMONSTRATING THAT IT HAS PURSUED DIRECT AND INDIRECT OFFSET FUNDING FROM OUR NATO ALLIES AND JAPAN FOR MIDDLE EAST CONSTRUCTION.

3. THIS CONGRESSIONAL REQUIREMENT WAS ALSO CITED IN THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE INTERAGENCY RESPONSE TO NSDD-99, U.S. SECURITY STRATEGY FOR THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA. THIS REPORT INCLUDES THE RECOMMENDATION THAT WE SEEK ALLIED COOPERATION NOT ONLY IN THE FORM OF A DIRECT MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION AND EN ROUTE FACILITIES BUT IN THE FORM OF ASSISTANCE WITH OUR UNILATERAL EFFORTS THERE. THIS REPORT IS STILL UNDERGOING WHITE HOUSE REVIEW, BUT WE ARE CONCURRENTLY BEGINNING ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

4. WHILE NONE OF THE ALLIES HAVE MADE DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUND MIDDLE EAST MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, THE AGGREGATE LEVEL OF INDIRECT ALLIED SUPPORT AND COMPENSATION FOR US EFFORTS IN SOUTH WEST ASIA MAY BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET CONGRESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS. ALLIED PARTICIPATION IN, AND SUPPORT OF, THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON IS ONE EXAMPLE OF THE TYPE OF ACTION WHICH CONGRESS MIGHT RECOGNIZE AS AN OFFSET. WHILE WE WILL POINT OUT THAT ALLIED PRESENCE WITH US IN BEIRUT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR POLITICAL REASONS, WE WILL ALSO NOTE THAT ALLIED TROOPS REDUCED THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL REQUIRED AND THUS OUR OVERALL SUPPORT COSTS.

5. FOR USNATO: WE REALIZE THE DIFFICULTY IN SPECIFYING

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DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE ALLIANCE THAT WOULD BE PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED AS COMPENSATION OR INDIRECT MONETARY SUPPORT FOR UNILATERAL US EFFORTS IN SWA. BUT WE ASK THE MISSION TO PROVIDE US WITH A LISTING OF ANY ACTIONS BY NATO OR BY INDIVIDUAL ALLIES WHICH COULD HELP TO MEET CONGRESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIST IN SECURING ADEQUATE CONSTRUCTION FUNDING FOR RAS BANAS.

6. FOR TOKYO: WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE IN ANSWERING ~~CONGRESSIONAL~~ CONCERN ABOUT BURDEN-SHARING IN SWA. IN GENERAL, WE PLAN TO EMPHASIZE JAPANESE HOST NATION SUPPORT FOR U.S. FORCES AND FACILITIES IN JAPAN (SOME OF WHICH WOULD COME INTO PLAY IN VARIOUS SWA CONTINGENCIES) AND JAPANESE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, INCLUDING ESPECIALLY EGYPT. WE RECOGNIZE, OF COURSE, THAT DIRECT JAPANESE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR U.S. BASE CONSTRUCTION IN ANY THIRD COUNTRY IS QUITE PROBABLY UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND, IN ANY CASE, POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

7. FOR INFO ADDRESSEES: WE WOULD WELCOME ANY SUGGESTIONS, GENERAL OR SPECIFIC, ON HOST COUNTRY ACTIVITIES -- ESPECIALLY SINCE THE NOVEMBER 16 CONGRESSIONAL ACTION -- THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PORTRAY AS AN OFFSET FOR RAS BANAS CONSTRUCTION. THIS WOULD INCLUDE ANY CONSTRUCTION COSTS BORN BY HOST GOVERNMENTS ANYWHERE THAT REDUCED US COSTS.

8. FOR ANKARA: WE UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTIES, WITH THE TURKS IN PARTICULAR, OF TYING SUCH THINGS AS THE INCIRLIK AIR HEAD TO OUR SWA STRATEGY. HOWEVER, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR TAKING AN ESPECIALLY CREATIVE LOOK AT THE INCIRLIK AGREEMENT AND OTHER SUPPORTIVE TURKISH ACTIONS.

SHULTZ

END OF MESSAGE

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